

Remarks

Claim rejections 35 USC § 102

Claims 1 and 3-18

Claim 1 requires a network having a number of nodes which are equipped to service contacts, ... one or more of the nodes being a contact center having a plurality of agents for servicing contacts. The newly cited Benjamin reference contains no such disclosure and is solely concerned with routing a contact within a single contact center.

Claim 1 further requires the steps of:

- b) assessing one or more bids issued by one or more nodes to determine a bid to be used in assigning the contact; and
- c) on the basis of said determination, assigning said contact to the node which issued said bid.

Benjamin's contacts are compared to a table of agent information to evaluate, based on an unspecified algorithm, which agent is best suited to handle the contact. There is no disclosure of receiving bids issued by nodes across a network, or of assessing the bids to determine a bid to be used in assigning the contact, or of and assigning the contact to the node which issued that bid.

A table of agent information is not a bid received from a node across a network generated in response to a contact information entity having been made available.

In fact, Benjamin is a rules based system of precisely the kind described in the background section of the specification of the present application. It fails to disclose the above features of the invention claimed in claim 1, and therefore fails to anticipate the invention of claim 1 or of claims 3-18 which depend therefrom.

Claims 19, 34 and 36-43

In the Office Action, all of the above claims are treated as being the same as claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that this is improper given that the claims deal with different components of a networked system whereas Benjamin deals with a contact center which operates in isolation from any such network of contact centers.

If, for example, one compares claims 1 and 19, it can be seen that the rejection as written for claim 1 cannot be applied equally to claim 19, and nor is it apparent how Benjamin can be considered in any sense to disclose the features dealing with the nodes on the network which issue the bids. As stated above, Benjamin makes no mention of any bidding system or of any transfer of contacts from one contact center to other nodes on a network of such nodes.

Benjamin prima facie contains no disclosure of any such nodes or of any networked mode of operation, or of any issuing of bids across the network and the transfer of contacts in response to such bids.

Applicant respectfully submits that it is not possible to determine how the above claims are alleged to be anticipated from reading the rejection as applied to claim 1, given that Benjamin is entirely silent on a network mode of operation involving the submission of bids from nodes on the network to handle the contact, and therefore the above claims, like claim 1, are not anticipated by Benjamin.

Claim rejections 35 USC § 103

Claims 11, 31 and 23-25

The rejections of these claims are based on a combination of Benjamin with either Klein or Rowstron. Each rejection is founded on an assumption that a base claim is anticipated by Benjamin. For the same reasons as are argued above, Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections of anticipation by Benjamin, and consequently

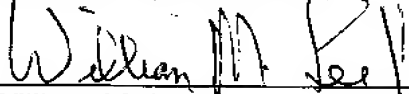
submits that the rejection of the above claims is deficient for the same reasons, at least.

In view of the amendments and arguments made herein, the applicants respectfully request that the examiner withdraw the rejections, and allow the application.

An extension of time is also submitted herewith.

August 27, 2008

Respectfully submitted,



William M. Lee, Jr.
Registration No. 26935
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
P.O. Box 2786
Chicago, Illinois 60690-2786
(312) 214-4800
(312) 759-5646 – Fax